

The following claims are presented for examination:

1. (Currently Amended) A telecommunications network comprising:

a first SONET/SDH ring that comprises a first plurality of nodes, wherein said first SONET/SDH ring defines a first address space and wherein each of said first plurality of nodes is identified by a unique address in said first address space; **[and]**

a second SONET/SDH ring that comprises a second plurality of nodes, wherein second SONET/SDH ring defines a second address space and wherein each of said second plurality of nodes is identified by a unique address in said second address space; **and**
an optical fiber that carries a first working STS-N that comprises:

(1) a second working STS-1 that is associated with said first SONET/SDN ring, and

(2) a third working STS-1 that is associated with said second SONET/SDN ring;

wherein there are at least two nodes that have an address in the address space of said first SONET/SDH ring and an address in the address space of said second SONET/SDH ring.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The telecommunications network of claim 1 further comprising an optical fiber that carries a first STS-N that comprises:

- (1) a first automatic protection switching channel that is associated with said first SONET/SDH ring, and
- (2) a second automatic protection switching channel that is associated with said second SONET/SDH ring.

4. (Original) The telecommunications network of claim 1 further comprising an optical fiber that carries a first STS-N that comprises:

- (1) the K_1 and K_2 line overhead bytes that are associated with said first SONET/SDH ring, and
- (2) the K_1 and K_2 line overhead bytes that are associated with said second SONET/SDH ring.

5. (Original) A telecommunications network comprising:

a first SONET/SDH ring; and
a second SONET/SDH ring;

an optical fiber that carries:

- (1) a first STS-1 that is associated with said first SONET/SDH ring, and
- (2) a second STS-1 that is associated with said second SONET/SDH ring.

6 through 11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a time-division multiplexed telecommunications system, said method comprising:

receiving a first optical carrier signal that comprises a first source address and a first destination address in a first address space;

receiving a second optical carrier signal that comprises a first source address and a first destination address in a second address space;

multiplexing said first optical carrier signal and said second optical carrier signal into a **SONET/SDN working** frame; and

transmitting said **SONET/SDN working** frame;

wherein said first optical carrier signal in said frame comprises a second source address and a second destination address in said first address space; and

wherein said second optical carrier signal in said frame comprises a second source address and a second destination address in said second address space.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12 further comprising:

receiving said **SONET/SDN working** frame;

demultiplexing said first optical carrier signal and said second optical carrier signal from said **SONET/SDN working** frame;

transmitting said first optical carrier signal, wherein said first optical carrier signal as transmitted comprises a third source address and a third destination address in said first address space; and

transmitting said second optical carrier signal, wherein said second optical carrier signal as transmitted comprises a fourth source address and a fourth destination address in said second address space.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a time-division multiplexed telecommunications system, said method comprising:

receiving a **SONET/SDH working** frame that comprises (1) a first optical carrier signal that comprises a first source address and a first destination address in a first address space, and (2) a second optical carrier signal that comprises a first source address and a first destination address in a second address space;

demultiplexing said first optical carrier signal and said second optical carrier signal from said **SONET/SDH working** frame;

transmitting said first optical carrier signal, wherein said first optical carrier signal as transmitted comprises a second source address and a second destination address in said first address space; and

transmitting said second optical carrier signal, wherein said second optical carrier signal as transmitted comprises a second source address and a second destination address in said second address space.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14 further comprising:

receiving a first optical carrier signal that comprises a third source address and a third destination address in a first address space;

receiving a second optical carrier signal that comprises a fourth source address and a fourth destination address in a second address space;

multiplexing said first optical carrier signal and said second optical carrier signal into said frame; and

transmitting said **SONET/SDH working** frame;

wherein said first optical carrier signal in said **SONET/SDH working** frame comprises said first source address and said first destination address in said first address space; and

wherein said second optical carrier signal in said **SONET/SDH working** frame comprises said first source address and said first destination address in said second address space.